

**OBJECT ORIENTED APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING
CONTEXT-BASED CLASS REPLACEMENT IN AN
OBJECT ORIENTED SYSTEM**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 An object oriented mechanism is disclosed that allows class replacement that is
based on a specified processing context by replacing existing configuration data with new
configuration data within an existing object oriented program. The configuration data is
preferably stored in a data structure external to the class definitions to allow modifying
the classes without re-compiling the class code. The configuration data includes multiple
10 entries, where each entry is a key-value pair. The key includes information relating to the
processing context, and the value includes information relating to the class that
corresponds to the key. When an instance of a class needs to be created, the context
information is retrieved, a key is generated from a combination of the class information
and the context information, and the context-sensitive key is used to retrieve the
15 corresponding class configuration data from the data structure that specifies a particular
class. An object that is an instance of the specified class is then created. By generating a
key that is context-specific, configuration data for a class can be scoped to a particular
processing context, thereby providing context-based class replacement.